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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

Office of the Director

SP - 40/75
10 April 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: DCI Proposal for Intelligence Assessment of Soviet
Dependence on Spaceborne Systems

REFERENCE: D/DCI/IC Memorandum, TS 206748/75, 31 March 1975

1. After his review of the 31 March 1975 report on the subject of US antisatellite (ASAT) developments, Mr. Colby sent a hand-written note to its originator, the IC Staff, asking: "Don't we need an intelligence assessment of likely Soviet dependence on space systems, their vulnerability, and an estimate whether we could anticipate some mutual standoff on interference with each other in this critical field?"

2. The report reflected the IC Staff's long-standing concern about the lack of a meaningful non-nuclear US ASAT capability. It found that no significant program assets exist within the DoD to develop an ASAT missile in the near term. The DCI's question probably was prompted by the following passages of the report: "All of the organizations within the DoD which were contacted by the IC Staff have supported the need for a better understanding of the Soviet use and dependence on space to support military activities. The intelligence community has not in the past provided data to permit such improved understanding.... No major net assessment of the relative dependence of the US and the Soviet Union on space operations has been performed to date."

25X1 3. I met with [] (CPAD/IC Staff) yesterday to discuss the matter. We agreed that the NIO/SP has the responsibility to prepare any community-wide effort along the lines of the DCI's proposal. [] said that the form of such a study--interagency report or national intelligence estimate--was not an important consideration to the IC Staff. But, in whatever form, he asked that the IC Staff be allowed to participate in the formulation of its terms of reference.

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4. In a parallel development, [] reported that he has discussed with Don Steininger (formerly ADDS&T and now the new chairman of the Net Threat Assessment Task Force of the Defense Science Board) the possibility of a two-week "summer" study addressing Soviet dependence on spaceborne systems. Steininger will be in Washington on 14 April to discuss with the IC Staff the contents of such a study.

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